

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**ANIMAL TRAILS AND WALKWAYS**

(Ft.)  
CODE 575

**DEFINITION**

A travel facility for livestock and/or wildlife to provide movement through difficult or ecologically sensitive terrain.

**PURPOSES**

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- \* Provide or improve access to forage, water and/or shelter.
- \* Improve grazing efficiency and distribution.
- \* Divert travel away from ecologically sensitive and/or erosive sites.
- \* ***Minimize sediment and nutrient delivery to surface waters.***

**CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES**

On grazing lands where animal movement is impeded or restricted such as, steep rough terrain, across rock outcrops, through dense timber or brush, over lava beds, on marsh rangelands, ***streams and/or water courses***, and grazing lands susceptible to overflow by water.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable For All The Purposes Stated Above.**

Trails or walkways shall be constructed wide enough to accommodate movement of livestock and access by operator.

Trails or walkways shall be constructed in such a manner that accelerated erosion will not occur.

Where necessary diversions with a safe outlet will be provided.

Trails or walkways seeded or planted to vegetative cover will be protected from grazing until planting material is fully established and capable of withstanding grazing and/or trampling

**Criteria Applicable For Walkways.**

Walkways will be constructed to meet minimum height requirements above normal high water.

During the construction process of walkways, borrow pits will be staggered so that access to grazing areas and back to walkway will be available from either side.

When necessary structures will be installed to prevent interference with natural water movement or to control salt water intrusion.

***Criteria Applicable for Stream Crossing and Livestock Access***

***Stream crossing and livestock access facilities shall have a stable surface. The surface shall be constructed of coarse aggregate. The coarse aggregate shall have a maximum size of 1-1/2 inches with less than 5 percent passing the #200 sieve. The minimum thickness of the coarse aggregate shall be 12 inches. The aggregate shall have a granular and/or fabric filter bedding as needed.***

***The surface of the crossing/access in a channel shall be the same elevation as the lowest stable elevation of the channel crossing section. The ramp shall extend up to the existing top of bank elevation.***

***Construct a fence to exclude livestock from the remaining***

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

**NRCS, WY  
January, 2000**

***streambanks and surface waters. Refer to Livestock Exclusion (472) to determine the location of the fence. Construct only temporary fence below high water mark or ice flow mark. Construct permanent and temporary fences according to the practice standard for Fencing (382).***

***Seed and mulch all exposed disturbed areas according to the practice standard for Critical Area Planting (342).***

***The ramp shall be constructed with a 6:1 slope or flatter. The minimum width of the ramp shall be 10 feet.***

#### **CONSIDERATIONS**

***Other practices that facilitate grazing distribution and proper intensity such as prescribed grazing should be implemented along with this practice.***

***Obtain local, state, and federal permits as needed.***

#### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Each trail or walkway ***or stream crossing/access*** shall have a site specific design based on the criteria in this standard and

as supplemented by additional criteria developed by each individual State using this practice.

#### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Operation will consist of periodic grading or shaping on trails and walkways to maintain designed dimensions. Maintenance will consist of repair that may be needed following major storm events such as high runoff events, high tides or other occurrences that cause damage and interfere in the normal operation of this practice.

***Inspect stream crossing and livestock watering access facilities at least annually and after any ice flow or major storm events that may cause damage to any of the components. Make repairs or replacements needed to ensure that the facility will function as intended. Items that may need repair or replacement include, but are not limited to:***

- Replace damaged or broken fence***
- Reseed areas where vegetation has been destroyed***
- Replace coarse aggregate as needed***
- Remove debris collected in fencing***